

HONORING U.S. ARMY CORPORAL
JUSTIN ROSS'S SERVICE IN AF-
GHANISTAN

HON. REID J. RIBBLE

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 1, 2011

Mr. RIBBLE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to remember and honor the life and sacrifice of Corporal Justin Ross. A native of Howard, Wisconsin, Cpl. Ross died while serving our country in the Helmand province of Afghanistan.

Cpl. Ross was assigned to the 428th Engineer Company, 863rd Battalion, U.S. Army Reserve, Wausau, Wisconsin. Our hearts go out to the Ross family and our prayers will be with them all during this difficult time. Cpl. Ross deserves nothing less than the eternal gratitude of our nation. He's a hero, and his sacrifice will not be forgotten.

Mr. Speaker, Cpl. Ross embodied the best qualities of a true American soldier. He was selfless, dedicated and brave. He is remembered by friends and family as a man with a strong, quiet spirit who put the safety of his fellow troops before his own and a man who earned the unwavering respect of his peers. Through his exemplary service, Cpl. Justin Ross has made Northeast Wisconsin and his country proud.

It is my honor to commemorate him and I urge my colleagues to join me today in honoring the life of Cpl. Justin Ross for the sacrifice he has made for the United States.

WALLACE HOPKINS RETIRES
AFTER 36 YEARS OF SERVICE TO
OUR NATION'S VETERANS

HON. C.W. BILL YOUNG

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 1, 2011

Mr. YOUNG of Florida. Mr. Speaker, it is with a mixture of happiness and sadness that I let my colleagues know of the retirement today of Wallace M. Hopkins, the Director of the Bay Pines VA Health Care System, after 36 years of dedicated and devoted service to our nation's veterans and the Department of Veterans Affairs.

It has been my pleasure to work with Mr. Hopkins for the past six years since his assignment to Bay Pines, which I have the privilege to represent. While at Bay Pines and throughout his career, Wally Hopkins' work in the field of Healthcare Systems Administration and Management has enhanced the quality of health care for our veterans for nearly four decades. He began his distinguished VA career in September 1975 as an Administrative Resident at the Iowa City VAMC. During the next 35 years, Mr. Hopkins served in increasingly more responsible administrative positions in Washington, Indiana, and Minnesota. He became the Director of the Brockton/West Roxbury VAMC in 1988 and then moved to Waco, Texas serving as Director there until 1996. Before coming to Bay Pines in 2005, he served as the Director of the Amarillo, Texas VA Health Care System.

Mr. Speaker, I am most familiar with Mr. Hopkins' leadership and commitment to the

care of our veterans while he has served as Director of the Bay Pines Healthcare System, one of the largest and most complex healthcare systems in the Department of Veterans Affairs. The numerous accomplishments and accolades that the staff at Bay Pines has earned during the tenure of Mr. Hopkins are indicative of his commitment to excellence. These awards include the 2008 Robert W. Carey Performance Excellence Award, the 2009 Robert W. Carey Performance Excellence Trophy, and 2010 Robert W. Carey Circle of Excellence Award, the three highest honors a VA hospital can earn. In 2007, 2008 and 2009, Bay Pines was ranked one of the highest of all Veterans Affairs Medical Centers in national performance measures for quality healthcare, access to services, and veteran and employee satisfaction rates. The Bay Pines Nursing Service has been nationally recognized with two 2007 Office of Nursing Service Innovation Awards and in 2009, they won the top award for the "Let's Get Certified" campaign by having the highest increase in individual nursing achievements of specialty certifications. Bay Pines received a top award from the American Heart Association and the American Stroke Association for implementing measures adhering to the two organizations' highest standards of stroke care and treatment. The Associations' Get with the Guidelines Stroke (GWTG-Stroke) Silver Performance Achievement Award recognized Bay Pines for its comprehensive system of high standard measures and for being the first VA facility to be recognized with the Performance Achievement Award. National Systems Redesign awards were also presented to Bay Pines for streamlining patient flow process in the inpatient and outpatient setting.

Bay Pines has undergone much needed growth in its services and facilities under the leadership of Wally Hopkins. These include the expansion of the emergency department with state of the art imaging and diagnostic equipment, a completely renovated and expanded suite of Intensive Care Units, numerous enhancements and expansion efforts in types of cardiology services offered, expanded high-tech equipment for radiology and nuclear medicine including a new PET CT and new Radiation Oncology and Cancer Infusion Center and a fully renovated, completely self sustaining laundry plant that supports three major Veterans Healthcare Administration facilities. His direct interest in serving the clinical needs of veterans is apparent in the number of major and minor construction projects currently taking place throughout the Bay Pines Healthcare System. At Bay Pines, these include the Mental Health Center, Inpatient Ward Renovation Project, Outpatient Surgery Center, Eye Center, Research Center and outside of the main campus the Lee County Clinic and the expansion of services and the nearly doubling the amount of Community Based Outpatients Clinic space throughout the system's ten county catchment area.

Wallace Hopkins' commitment to caring for our Nation's veterans comes from the heart. He is a highly decorated veteran himself having served in Vietnam as an Air Force F-4 reconnaissance pilot. He earned a Master of Science degree in Health Care Administration in 1976 from Trinity University in San Antonio, Texas. Prior to his graduate studies, he earned a Bachelor of Business Administration degree from Southwest Texas State University

in 1968 and he is a Fellow of the American College of Healthcare Executives.

Mr. Speaker, as I said at the outset, it is with some degree of sadness that we say goodbye to Wally Hopkins as the Director of the Bay Pines Healthcare System. He has led the staff there to the pinnacle of quality care for the veterans of our community. But I know that the skill and dedication with which he has led will pass down to the next leadership team and will continue to ensure that our veterans receive the highest quality of care which they have earned and which they deserve.

And I am happy for Mr. Hopkins and his wife Susan, who has been a true partner in his life-long service to veterans, as he retires from a career in which he has excelled. He is a true patriot as anyone who has heard him speak on Memorial Day can attest. And I am happy that he will remain a part of our community in which he has been active in many important areas since arriving in Pinellas County six years ago. Please join me in saying thank you to Mr. Wallace M. Hopkins for a job and a career well done and wishing him and his wife all the best in their retirement.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. PETER J. VISCLOSKY

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 1, 2011

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Speaker, on April 1, 2011, I was absent from the House and missed rollcall votes 215 through 224.

Had I been present for rollcall 215, agreeing to the amendment, Adam B. Schiff of California Amendment No. 29 to H.R. 658, the FAA Reauthorization and Reform Act of 2011, I would have voted "aye."

Had I been present for rollcall 216, agreeing to the amendment, Pete Sessions of Texas Amendment No. 20 to H.R. 658, the FAA Reauthorization and Reform Act of 2011, I would have voted "no."

Had I been present for rollcall 217, agreeing to the amendment, Steven C. LaTourette of Ohio Amendment No. 21 to H.R. 658, the FAA Reauthorization and Reform Act of 2011, I would have voted "aye."

Had I been present for rollcall 218, agreeing to the amendment, Bill Shuster of Pennsylvania Amendment No. 24 to H.R. 658, the FAA Reauthorization and Reform Act of 2011, I would have voted "no."

Had I been present for rollcall 219, on a motion to recommit with instructions H.R. 658, the FAA Reauthorization and Reform Act of 2011, I would have voted "aye."

Had I been present for rollcall 220, on passage of H.R. 658, the FAA Reauthorization and Reform Act of 2011, I would have voted "no."

Had I been present for rollcall 221, on a motion to order the previous question on the rule for H. Res. 194, Providing for consideration of H.R. 1255, the Government Shutdown Prevention Act of 2011, I would have voted "no."

Had I been present for rollcall 222, on agreeing to H. Res. 194, Providing for consideration of H.R. 1255, the Government Shutdown Prevention Act of 2011, I would have voted "no."

Had I been present for rollcall 223, on a motion to recommit with instructions H.R. 1255,